

which is looked upon at Gibraltar as one of the masterpieces of the nineteenth century. You may feel their intellectual pulse from this. At first I apologised and talked of youthful blunders and all that, really being ashamed; but finding them, to my astonishment, sincere, and fearing they were stupid enough to adopt my last opinion, I shifted my position, just in time, looked very grand, and passed myself off for a child of the Sun, like the Spaniard in Peru.

We were presented to the Governor, Sir George Don, a general and G.C.B., a very fine old gentleman, of the Windsor Terrace school, courtly, almost regal in his manner, paternal, almost officious in his temper, a sort of mixture of Lord St. Vincent and the Prince de Ligne, English in his general style, but highly polished and experienced in European society. His palace, the Government House, is an old convent, and one of the most delightful residences I know, with a garden under the superintendence of Lady Don, full of rare exotics, with a beautiful terrace over the sea, a berceau of vines, and other delicacies which would quite delight you. . . . He behaved to us with great kindness, asked us to dine, and gave us a route himself for an excursion, to the Sierra da Ronda, a savage mountain district, abounding in the most beautiful scenery and bugs!

We returned from this excursion, which took us a week, yesterday, greatly gratified. The country in which we travelled is a land entirely of robbers and smugglers. They commit no personal violence, but lay you on the ground and clean out your pockets. If you have less than sixteen dollars they shoot you; that is the tariff, and is a loss worth, risking. I took care to have very little more, and no baggage which I could not stow in the red bag which my mother remembers making for my pistols. You will wonder how we managed to extract pleasure from a life which afforded us hourly peril for our purses and perhaps for our lives, which induced fatigue greater than I ever experienced, for here are no roads, and we were never less than eight hours a day on horseback, picking our way through a course which, can only be compared to the steep bed of an exhausted cataract, and with so slight a prospect of attaining for a reward either food or rest. — I will tell you. The country was beautiful, the novelty of the life was great, and above all we had Brunet. What a man! Born in Italy of French-parents, he has visited, as the captain of a privateer, all countries of the Mediterranean: Egypt, Turkey, Syria.

¹ Meredith testifies that Disraeli's lectures on morals and politics had made a great impression on Sir George.